

**Remarks**

This Amendment is in response to the Office Action dated **June 17, 2004**. In the Office Action, claim 24 is objected to because of an informality. All of the claims have been rejected in light of prior art.

New claims 28 and 29 have been added. Support for the new figures is found at least in the drawings.

**1.**

Claim 24 is objected to because of an informality in line 7 of the claim. Claim 24 has been amended. The objection is believed to be overcome.

Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

**2.**

Claims 1-9, 11, 13-20, and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by WO 00130563 (Brown).

Claim 1 has been amended to recite that the spline and adjacent band are separated by a gap. Claim 1 as amended is believed to be patentable over Brown as are the claims dependent therefrom.

Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

**3.**

Claims 1-9, 11-20, and 22-27 are rejected under 35 USC 102(e) as being anticipated by US 6511505 (Cox et al).

As discussed above, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the spline and adjacent band are separated by a gap. Claim 1 as amended is believed to be patentable over Cox as are the claims dependent therefrom.

Claim 24 has been amended to recite that each spline terminates short of the adjacent trough toward which it extends to form a gap between the spline and the trough. A plurality of splines are aligned in a longitudinal direction. Claim 24 as amended is believed to be patentable over Cox as are the claims dependent therefrom.

Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

4.

Claims 10 and 21 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over WO 00/30563 (Brown).

Claims 10 and 21, dependent from claim 1, are believed to be patentable over Brown in light of the amendment to claim 1.

Withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

**Conclusion**

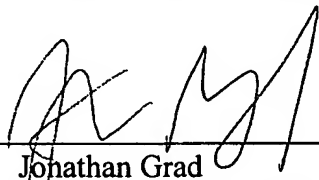
In light of the amendments to the claims, the instant claims are believed to be patentable. Applicant requests the withdrawal of the objections/rejections. Applicant also respectfully requests notification of the allowability of the claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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